Regulator for Cable Operators

3740. SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether in the wake of T.V. Channels becoming pay channels, price-war has recently started in Delhi and other towns between cable operators and subscribers ;

(b) if so, whether due to absence of any regulator, cable operators are now demanding and charging subscription arbitrarily without giving any receipt ;

(c) if so, the details thereof ;

(d) whether Government propose to introduce any foolproof mechanism for convenience of general public which indicates actual extra burden fallen on cable operators which should genuinely be shared by subscribers ;

(e) if so, whether, *inter-alia.* Government propose to appoint a regulator for the purpose ; and

(f) if so, by when ?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ) : (a) to (c) The rates of subscription for cable networks is purely a contractual affair between the subscriber and cable operators and is market driven. Government does not regulate the charges levied by Private Channels and cable operators.

(d) to (f) The existence of a large number of competing channels itself ensures protection of viewer interest which is further reinforced by existence of laws such as Cable Television Networks (Regulation) Act, 1995 and the Consumer Protection Act, in addition to the MRTP Act. A proposed convergence legislation does have provisions to enable regulation; of Cable Networks.

Opening of Lokadalats at district level

3741. SHRI B. J. PANDA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the restructuring of the legal system in the country by opening Lok Adalats at district level is under consideration;

(b) if so, the matters expected to come within the purview of these Lok Adalats; and

(c) the estimated number of cases presently pending at district level courts in the country ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) Permanent and continuous Lok Adalats are being set up in every district throughout the country.

(b) Under sub-section (5) of Section 19 of the Legal Services Authorities Act, 1987, as amended, Lok Adalats have jurisdiction to determine and to arrive at a compromise or settlement between the parties to a dispute in respect of any cases pending before; or any matter which is falling within the jurisdiction of and is not brought before, any court for which the Lok Adalat is organized. However, Lok Adalats have no jurisdiction in respect of any case or matter relating to an offence not compoundable under any law.

(c) As on 30th June, 2001, approximately 2.03 crore cases were pending in the subordinate courts in the country.

Re-introduction of provisions of sections 61 and 62 of the IPC

3742. PROF. A. LAKSHMISAGAR :

SHRI H.K. JAVARE GOWDA : Will the Minister of LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the recent observations of the Supreme Court regarding need to re-introduce the repealed provisions of Section 61 and 62 of the Indian Penal Code to forfeit property in corruption cases to check the growth of corruption and illegal gains; and

(b) If so the reaction of Government in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF LAW, JUSTICE AND COMPANY AFFAIRS (SHRI ARUN JAITLEY) : (a) The Supreme Court has recently in Shobha Suresh Jumani Vs. Appellate Tribunals Forfeited Property, 2001 (4) SCALE 4 observed as under:

" Sections 61 and 62 were deleted by Indian Penal Code (Amendment) Act, 1921. But considering the situation prevailing in the society, it appears that the said provisions are required to be re-introduced so as to have deterrent effect on those who are bent upon to accumulate wealth at the cost of the society by misusing their post or power. We hope that the Legislature would consider this aspect appropriately."